Overcrowding in Mumbai Suburban Trains

258. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Mumbai suburban trains are overcrowded and have become a death trap and a source of harassment to women; and

(b) whether Government have any immediate plans to bring relief to the Mumbai commuters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) It is a fact that suburban trains in Mumbai are overcrowded during morning and evening peak hours. However, these trains are not death traps or a source of harassment to women. Accommodation in suburban trains is earmarked for ladies apart from running ladies specials during peak hours. Police and Railway Protection Force including lady staff have been provided on platforms and in the ladies compartments especially during night time.

(b) Increase in number of coaches is a continuous process and is undertaken to meet the needs.

Highspeed Bullet Trains

259. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that proposals to establish high-speed bullet trains are under the active consideration of the Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a techno-economic feasibility project has been prepared on the subject; and

(d) if so, the details of the same and the outcome of the exercise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Refresher Courses and Safety Camps for Railway Personnel

260. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of Railway personnel deemed as "safety category staff" do not attend the refresher courses and safety camps organised by the Zonel Railways and CAG has also indicated this in its recent report; and

(b) if so, the steps taken towards human resource development and results achieved so far by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) There have been some shortfall in the staff attending refresher courses and safety camps. CAG also in their Report No. 9 of 1999 for the year ended 31.3.98 has drawn attention to this aspect. However, on the Indian Railways a thrust has been given to the training of staff. In this regard an integrated approach to improve training effectiveness has been initiated in 1999 wherein "Manual on Management of Training" has been issued for effective guidance and monitoring of training activities. During 1998-99 about 65,000 staff (including safety categories) have been given refresher training as compared to approx. 49,000 during 1997-98. As regards Safety Camps the same is being organised periodically to update the knowledge of staff involved in train operations and 35,500 safety cateogry staff have been trained in Safety Camps during 1999 as against 29,577 in 1998. Concerted efforts are being made to bridge the gap between the number of staff required to be trained and actual number trained.